

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): A Risk Assessment of the Bats of the Greater Maya Mountains of Belize

Implementation Partners for this Project:

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): 1 February 2008 – 31 July 2009

Date of Report (month/year):
July 15, 2009

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

The funding received from this grant provided opportunities to collect data in many of the biological “Black holes” or areas with distributional knowledge gaps in the Greater Maya Mountains. The data collected during this project provided important information for ecological niche modeling and the risk assessment of the bats of Belize.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose *Identify threats to bats and their habitats within the Greater Maya Mountain massif as well as identify species facing the greatest risk or loss of population. Raise awareness of the critical roles bats play in neotropical ecosystems. This project also contributes to the basic knowledge of the distribution of bats within Belize in an area with little or no previous data. This project supports efforts to adequately review the bats of Mesoamerica and the Caribbean by IUCN and identify those at risk that would benefit from efforts uplisting species to higher levels of concern (e.g., LC to EN).*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level: Identify threats to bats and their habitats within the Greater Maya Mountain massif as well as identify species facing the greatest risk or loss of population. Raise awareness of the critical roles bats play in neotropical ecosystems. This project also contributes to the basic knowledge of the distribution of bats within	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report

Belize in an area with little or no previous data. This project supports efforts to adequately review the bats of Mesoamerica and the Caribbean by IUCN and identify those at risk that would benefit from efforts uplisting species to higher levels of concern (e.g., LC to EN).	
<i>1. Data is collected for sufficient species and locations to provide bat/habitat association models and an evaluation of all species to determine those at greatest risk.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>2. A case is made to IUCN during the Mesoamerican and Caribbean species review meeting (January 2008) for uplisting those bat species at risk that currently are not adequately recognized as threatened or endangered.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>3. Text and images and a suggested layout for a bat conservation pamphlet are provided in a digital format to an interested NGO within Belize e.g. PACT of FCD for distribution in Belize by December 2008.</i>	There was no response from CEPF supported partners in Belize nor other government or NGO agencies in Belize for this task. Therefore based on discussion with Ms. Michele Zador, I completed the entire task by reallocating part of my allotted project budget 3,000 copies of the pamphlet were printed. Copies were distributed at the final meeting held in Belmopan and 1,500 copies provided to the Wildlife and Conservation Officers of the Forest Department.
<i>4. A presentation of results and recommendations will be conducted June 2009. All relevant NGOs and government agencies to be invited. If completed by the NGO the bat conservation brochure will also be distributed at this meeting.</i>	Meeting held and brochures distributed. A local TV station also interviewed me at conclusion regarding the importance of bats.

Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: Threats to bats and their habitats within the Greater Maya Mountain massif have been identified. The bat species facing the greatest risk of extinction or loss of population have been identified	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>1.1 A spatially explicit list of sites and potential sampling sites added to a master database using GIS spatial tools is completed by April 2008.</i>	Satisfactorily completed
<i>1.2 Field sampling of all selected sites is completed</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final

<i>by June 2009.</i>	PDF report
<i>1.3 Identification of threats and the risk assessment completed by June 2009</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>1.4 Identification of those bat species facing the greatest risk of extinction or loss of population has been completed by July 2009.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
Output 2: Management recommendations to relevant management agencies e.g., Belize government agencies and NGOs have been made that would eliminate or reduce risks to bat species and habitats.	Satisfactorily completed
<i>2.1 A report with conclusions, management considerations and recommendations to eliminate or reduce risks for those species identified to be under the greatest and most imminent threats by July 2009.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>2.2 Distribute the technical report in PDF format to all relevant government of Belize agencies posted on the government Clearing House and the BERDS web sites for all interested parties by July 2009.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
Output 3: A brochure in the form of text, images and basic suggested layout for a bat conservation awareness brochure to be distributed within Belize is provided digitally to an interested NGO with funds for publication e.g., FCD or PACT.	There was no response from CEPF supported partners in Belize nor other government or NGO agencies in Belize for this task. Therefore based on discussion with Ms. Michele Zador, I completed the entire task by reallocating part of my allotted project budget 3,000 copies of the pamphlet were printed. Copies were distributed at the final meeting held in Belmopan and 1,500 copies provided to the Wildlife and Conservation Officers of the Forest Department.
<i>3.1 Texts, images and basic suggested layout prepared by June 2009.</i>	Completed as noted above
Output 4: A report of results listing the species ranked by threats is completed and distributed to relevant decision makers and made widely available for all interested parties.	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>4.1 Technical report completed and distributed to relevant government agencies, NGOs and posted on public access website for all interested parties by July 2009.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
Output 5: Recommendations prepared for the IUCN meeting to uplist those species facing an increased risk.	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report
<i>5.1 Documentation prepared for species warranting uplisting of their conservation status by IUCN based on the results of the Selva Maya Risk Assessment completed by January 2008.</i>	Satisfactorily completed as documented in final PDF report

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

There was no cooperation or “synergy” from CEPF supported NGOs for the Greater Maya Mountains or Chiquibul Projects in Belize, nor with CEPF/CI staff working on the Key Biodiversity Areas project, which I planned to use this project intended to build upon.

The one science based CEPF supported project in Belize relating to biodiversity and amphibians was very helpful and we did achieve synergy for some field research.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

It will save time and funding to allow future science based projects to operate within the field of science and not waste time or energy waiting to link with NGOs and staff w/o adequate science background. Capacity building is a term often used with NGOs, however there is no realistic "Capacity" building in most Third World developing countries with park wardens/rangers that are marginally literate or with limited education and expecting them to grasp ecological principles and application of detailed analyses without adequate background education.

With more the 23 years of experience living and working full time in Central America, I have realized that it is almost like the saying "Never try to teach a pig to crow, it wastes your time and annoys the pig" is a truism. Virtually every workshop and training session I have been involved in regionally or nationally has failed to add "capacity" to any of these individuals or NGOs that have minimal education backgrounds. Most simply collect their certificates of participation and never attempt to apply the science or lessons learned.

While the use of the phrase "this project will provide capacity building" is included in virtually every research permit application and grant proposal I have reviewed and makes donors feel warm and fuzzy, the reality is most of these efforts fail to make any contribution to conservation efforts. Such efforts are always worthwhile when local university students are included, but not with the rangers/wardens of protected areas and/or most NGO staff.

In the case of this project weeks of potential field time that could have been productive during the first year were spent waiting for a response from several CEPF supported NGOs in an effort to coordinate field work and provide "training". In the end I had no choice but to keep to my pre-planned schedule in order to meet all of the project milestones as agreed. While some effort was made to link up again for the 2009 field season with the same NGOs I did not wait more than a week before forging on without a response.

Field access to many sites is only available during a very short window of the dry season, therefore I could not afford to wait to achieve some sort of "synergy."

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/failure)

The project proceeded as planned and success followed after I dropped efforts to link with local NGOs.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

The project proceeded as planned and success followed after I dropped efforts to link with local NGOs..

VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount US\$	Notes
Bruce W. Miller	In-kind support and personal funds	\$15,000.00	Personal funds were also used to support aspects of the project
S. Greenfield	Grant	\$10,000.00	A long time donor to previous projects supported the IUCN portion of the project that allowed me to complete the necessary analyses and support information to recommend uplisting of the species. This was necessary to meet the timeline prior to the CEPF funding becoming available. This was not the result of receiving this CEPF grant, but based on the reduced amount of the CEPF grant from the original request.

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

Phase II for the Belize Risk Assessment will continue with personal funding and additional support will be sought as CEPF funding options have run their course. The additional risk assessments for the bats for Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala as well as the landscape level for all of Central America will continue with personal funding and additional support and donors will be sought.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grant Writer system initially seemed to be an excellent means of keeping everyone involved up to date, however the system appeared to have been flawed. I was not able to update some quarterly reporting initially as the system would not save the entered reports. Once that hurdle was passed then apparently the regional offices were not linked to the master CEPF Grant Writer systems and were not able to access the current reports and continued to make the assumption that reports had not been filed.

In all cases this project was completely on track both with the financial budget and timelines and ALL reports were filed well prior to the stated and agreed upon deadline.

The CEPF staff apparently were not able to access these dynamic versions and it was discovered late last year that apparently there were 2 separate versions on the server, one that the field people were completing and the master database that the staff was access and these were not synchronized.

This was/is a great idea and if the IT folks can fix the bugs is an excellent means of tracking projects.

VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

Please include your full contact details below:

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